



CONNECTICUT AFL-CIO

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Testimony of the Connecticut AFL-CIO before the Labor and Public Employees Committee

March 3rd, 2015

Senator Winfield, Representative Tercyak and members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee, I am Lori Pelletier and I serve as the Executive Secretary- Treasurer of the Connecticut AFL-CIO. I am here to testify on behalf of the 900 affiliated local unions who represent 200,000 working men and women from every city and town in our great state support:

S.B. No. 984 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING THE UNIONIZATION OF AGRICULTURAL WORKERS, NONPARTISAN LEGISLATIVE MANAGEMENT EMPLOYEES AND STATE EDUCATION RESOURCE CENTER EMPLOYEES. (LAB)

When the National Labor Relations Act was signed into law some of the jurisdiction on which employees should have the right to collectively bargain was left up to the states. Over the years we have worked to eliminate these exemptions and extend to all Connecticut residents the freedom of assembly. This bill is another step toward recognizing the value and worth of all workers. Regardless of your occupation, if there are three or more employees the right to collectively bargain should be yours for the asking. All work should be respected as should all workers, and the right to collectively bargain is about respect and dignity on the job.

When Dr. King got assassinated in 1968 he was in Memphis because the Sanitation workers wanted respect. People treated them as second (or even third) class citizens, like property. The "I AM A MAN" signs carried by those vital municipal employees were as poignant to them as they would be if farm workers carried them today. I have had numerous conversations regarding this issue, and it is of great distress to me that there is more concern about the cows on the farm than the very workers who take care of them.

The right to collectively bargain does not put companies out of business, poor management does. The right to collectively bargain does however provide workers with a voice on their job independent of the bosses. I am proud of the work done here by my predecessors to ensure that workers have the ability to bargain collectively, now is the time to continue that work and in turn give workers a much needed voice on the job.

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